

Whitley Parish Council

1.0 The meeting was opened at 7.00 pm by the Chair Cllr Walton.

2.0 Open Public Forum(OPF) 18th July 2023

2.1 A resident questioned the management by the Parish Council of the grass cutting in the village, considering the quality to be inadequate and untidy; some verges are cut others a left untended. The resident also challenged the provision by the Council of festive lighting and Christmas Trees and expressed disappointment in the absence of hanging baskets in the village. Contrasting the state of Whitley with the verge and roadside facilities in adjacent Parishes it was suggested that the Whitley Council are not achieving the value for money enjoyed within other communities.

The relative income levels between the various Parishes surrounding Whitley were debated with the conclusion that absolute precepts range between £24,000 and £10,500. Each Parish have their own specific expenditure profiles dependent upon the unique circumstances resulting in a variety of budgetary demands.

The resident questioned the decisions of the Parish suggesting that their current choices do not meet the requirements of the community. Assurances were provided to the resident that the Whitley Council has in the past and continues to evaluate the provision of Christmas Lighting and Hanging Baskets in the village, commensurate with the consequential impact this will have on the precept requirement and the additional financial burden this will place upon Whitley residents.

Sentiments were expressed questioning the nature of the work undertaken by the Parish and the extent to which the decisions made, and choices actioned were for the benefit of the community. This assertion was challenged by all Councillors, who reminded the resident of the efforts undertaken by the Parish in attempting to fight the consequential damage that could be wrought on the village with the Gale Common Ash Removal Project. It was a stressful and bruising three-year campaign that was conducted entirely with the interests of the community in mind.

North Yorkshire Council Councillor J McCartney reported on various items as follows:

- the arrangements for the collection of green bins were detailed and it was confirmed that the new regime will be introduced in August with additional charges being applied of £29 covering the period to March 2024. For residents choosing to return their green bin, assurances were given that garden waste can be deposited in the general grey waste bin that will be sent to landfill. It is worth noting going forward there will be no green waste bin collections in December, January, and February.
- The 20's plenty campaign continues to generate traction. Cllr McCartney observed that this may be a distraction from the campaign for the deployment of average speed cameras on the 30 critical stretches of the North Yorkshire Highways; the roads that experience the most accident deaths.
- The yellow lines on Whitley Farm Close and Learning Lane will have been approved at the behest of the Highways Officers who consider the impairment of traffic sight lines at these points to be critical. Councillors expressed their concerns that whilst the yellow lines do deal with the issue of sight line for emerging traffic, they do not deal with the consequential impact of the parking of stationery vehicles who will simply locate their vehicles along the length of the A19 with the knock-on impact to road users on this busy arterial road.

A resident requested what amenities, registered by North Yorkshire Council, are recognised as being available to Whitley residents. It was considered by planning officers that Whitley is a mere adjunct to Eggborough whose community facilities they conclude are more than adequate to meet the needs of Whitley residents. The fact that Whitley is situated at the other side of the M62 Motorway seems to be irrelevant. The resident also asked whether the Parish Council could establish whether the George and Dragon is recognised as an Asset of Community interest.

Action: Cllr White to investigate the details of the Assets of Community Value registered within Whitley village.

2.2 The Chair closed the public forum and proceeded to the conduct of the Parish meeting.

Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Meeting held on 18th July 2023 at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School Annex Building – 04/24

3.0 Present: Cllr Walton (Chair), Cllr White (Vice Chair, Cllr Humphrey, Cllr Blackburn, Cllr Woodhead and Clerk to the Council J Hunter.

4.0 Apologies for absence:

4.1 Apologies for absence were presented by Cllr Cole.

5.0 Disclosure of interest:

5.1 There were no other interests registered.

6.0 Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Meeting held on 20th June 2023:

6.1 It was resolved the minutes were a true record of the Whitley Parish Council meeting held on 20th June 2023..

Action: The Clerk to deliver a copy for signature by the Chair.

7.0 Matters for information and action as required:

7.1 Chairs Report: Cllr Humphrey advised that the Chair's report is ready for printing and distribution. It was confirmed that Tunstall Healthcare will print the newsletter on behalf of the Parish. Cllr White suggested that the Council may wish to consider adding a couple of additional observations, including some warning or advice that next year's precept may need to be increased given further cost pressures on the Parish budget, and the proactive promotion of the vacancies in the Council to fill the full complement of Parish Councillors.

Action: Cllr White to redraft the Chair's report with the addition of these points.

7.2 Parish Council Vacancy: Cllr White and the Clerk reminded Councillors of the process to be applied leading to the co-option of qualified residents in filling the vacancy of Parish Councillors. Democratic Services of North Yorkshire Council are to be informed of the vacancies and the intention of the Parish Council to actively advertise the position. This department of NYC will formally generate a Notice of Vacancy to be posted on the village notice boards. After elapse of the specified time the Parish Council will be authorised to co-opt residents into the post without the need of formal elections.

Cllr Blackburn notified the meeting that it is his intention to stand down from his post as Parish Council from November 2023. His last meeting will be October 2023.

7.3 Memorial Bench: The Clerk confirmed the formal quotation for the bench has been received from Glasdon. It was agreed that approval of the price be obtained from the Police Development Fund and quotations to be sought from local contractors for the installation of the bench at the agreed location.

Action: Clerk to seek quotations from a local contractor for the installation of the park bench.

7.4 Trees in Daffodil Park and Lee View: Councillors discussed the request from residents in Whitley Farm Close who expressed concerns about the growth of trees in Daffodil Park adjacent to their properties. Five trees in Daffodil Park have grown to such a height they overhang their properties, impede sunlight, and interfere with the signal to their satellite dish. Cllr White and Cllr Walton reported on their meeting with the residents. The legal status was considered with the conclusion that there is no requirement for the Parish Council to undertake remedial action in felling or pruning the trees. However, before any final decision it was agreed that quotes be sought from tree surgeons for recommended options in the management of the tree foliage. Critical to the consideration of options would include the ongoing budgetary requirement in the management of the tree lines throughout the Parish and precedents that will be set in the future in meeting the demands and responding to complaints from residents whose properties border the Daffodil Park and the other opens spaces in the village.

A resident from Lee View reported a problem from the encroachment of a shrub immediately adjacent to the rear of their property and requested action be undertaken.

Action: Clerk to obtain quotations for the management of the trees.

8.0 Correspondence received: The Clerk summarised the details of correspondence received by email or post.

8.1 Emails and postage.

8.1.1 Clerk presented the following details of emails or correspondence by mail relevant to the affairs of Whitley Parish Council:

8.1.1.1 An email from North Yorkshire Council (NYC) advising of the introduction of charges covering the cost of green bin waste collection. Noted

8.1.1.2 An email from the Chief Executive of North Yorkshire Council attaching a copy of the Parish Charter that sets out how the NYC will work together with Local and Parish Councils for the benefit of local people in maintaining and improving services. Copy forward to all Councillors for review.

8.1.1.3 A conversation with the administration manager of Whitley & Eggborough CP School. It is possible that the Annexe Building will no longer be available for Parish Council meetings as the building is now being used by a private contractor to host pre & post school childcare facilities. If the necessary permissions are not received Parish Council meetings will revert to the Main Hall. The access keys will need to be returned before the close of the term. It is also noted that the school will no longer grant access by the Community Payback Teams to its facilities.

8.1.1.4 An email from Democratic Services North Yorkshire who are inviting individuals to become members of a new social media group North Yorkshire Local Access Forum to advise NYC and other bodies how people can make best use of resources to get out and about in North Yorkshire including on pathways, gravel ways, and bye ways.

8.2 Social Media

8.2.1.1 There was nothing significant to report on the content of social media other than the issue of dog mess on Gravel Hill Lane.

9.0 Planning matters: The Clerk provided a summary of the planning applications made in the month for review and consideration by the Council.

9.1.1 There are no new planning applications to report.

10.0 Council Finance & Administration:

10.1 RFO Report as at 18/07/2023:

Bank/Account	Income since 1st April 2023	Expenditure since 1st April 2023		Current Balance	Notes/Comment
Santander Deposit	27.09			15,275.59	Interest paid monthly
Santander Current Account (Cash Book)	6,342.00	7,048.91		7,371.42	No interest
Total Bank Balances				22,647.01	
Less following funds:					
Allocated Funds		Surplus from Crossing Drainage Daffodil Field		1,798.71 12,230.00	
Total Allocated funds				14,028.71	
Parish Council Bank Funds		Future Development and Facility Provision –Buildings. Future Development and Facility Provision – ROS. Future Development and Facility Provision -Nature Reserve. Unexpected/unforeseeable expenditure.		8,618.30	
VAT due for reclaim				1,814.25	
Total Unallocated Parish Funds				10,432.55	

The Clerk presented a cash flow summary analysing month by month the actual receipts and payments up to July 2023, with a forecast of income and expenditure for the remainder of the year to March 2024. Total expenditure up to 31st March 2024 is anticipated to amount to £30,472.37 that compares with total income of precept and rent flowing into the bank for the year of £10,867. The balance of reserves carried forward at the end of the year is forecast to be £6,233.47.

Councillors considered that given the finalisation of the Gale Common Campaign and increasing pressure on the limited funds of the Parish it is prudent and important to undertake a comprehensive review of budgets and expenditure requirement for the forthcoming year 2023-24. Priorities will need to be assessed and future finance requirements quantified to meet the various overheads and capital expenditure demands that will need to meet from precept.

10.2 Accounts Payable: The following payments were approved for settlement by cheque.

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £
22547	George Fillingham Ltd	1,800.00
22548	North Yorkshire Council – Protective Cost Order	200.00
22549	North Yorkshire Council – Protective Cost Order	200.00
22550	Glasdon – purchase of memorial bench subject to approval from Police Federation	879.79

10.3 Accounts Payable retrospectively: The following retrospective payments made by bank transfer since the last council meeting were approved.

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £

11.0 Recreational Open Space in Whitley:

11.1 Parks and Verges:

11.1.1 Parks & Playground Maintenance: Councillors considered various items in connection with maintenance within the park and playgrounds.

11.1.1.1 Cllr White enquired into the status of the Playground Inspection that is scheduled to be conducted imminently.

11.1.2 Community Payback Scheme: Cllr White advised that the Community Team have continued to undertake work in the parks. The school have indicated that access to the Annexe Building will cease from the new autumn term as the facilities are to be used to host breakfast and after school clubs. All further Community Payback activity will consequently be placed on hold as toilet facilities and shelters must be provided to the team members.

11.1.3 Verge Cutting: Councillors reflected on the comments made during the public meeting and agreed that a comprehensive review of the verge and grass cutting schedule and requirements be conducted in anticipation of the setting of the financial budgets for the new year.

12.0 A19 Safety:

12.1 Speeding on A19: Cllr White advised that there was nothing to report.

13.0 A.O.B.

13.1 Cllr White suggested that the Council seek a formal quote for the repair of the notice board on Templar Close.

13.2 Cllr White commented on the difficulties of the Parish Council in their communication with the village. Not everyone is on social media and the only other resource available is the notice board to which news and information can be posted. The practicality of posting Parish Council minutes onto the notice board was discussed. The idea of the regular provision of the of a published newsletter was debated with a broad discussion of if and how the Parish Council could and should engage with the community in the discharge of their responsibilities.

14.0 Confirm the date, time and place of next meeting:

Next Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 19th Sept; 2023 at 7pm at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School.

Closure of meeting: 9:35 pm